

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that Yoshitaka et al. would not have rendered the claimed invention obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Declaration Under 37 C.F.R. §1.131

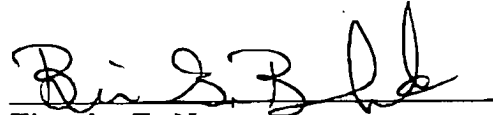
Although Applicant believes that Yoshitaka et al. fails to render the present invention obvious as stated above, Applicants are enclosing herewith a Declaration under 37 C.F.R. §1.131 which establishes that the invention disclosed herein relating to methyl acetate, t-butyl acetate, C12 to C18 hydrocarbons, acetone and methylene chloride as zero-VOC solvents was made on a date prior to the publication date of November 11, 1996 of the Yoshitaka et al. publication. As such, Applicant submits that the reference, if applicable as relevant art (which Applicant contends is not the case) is no longer "prior art" under 35 U.S.C. §102(a) or §103 in view of the Declaration Under 37 C.F.R. §1.131.

Conclusion

Applicant submits that the present application is now in condition for allowability. Withdrawal of the rejection and early notification of allowability is earnestly solicited. Should any issues remain unresolved, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned to attempt to resolve any such issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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